

Anthropological Fragments on Life:
From “the Meaning of Life” to “Awakening to the Spirit of Life”

by
Katsumi Tobino

This anthropological essay aims to revisit the way people live while constantly asking themselves what the meaning of life is, and to identify the realities of living as a human being in terms of the spirit of life.

Starting with the anthropological questions about human life presented by Shizuteru Ueda, a philosopher of religion who belonged to the Kyoto School, the essay discusses how Ueda showed interest in Kitaro Nishida's life. The discussion reveals that the questions surrounding life in Ueda's anthropological thoughts were rooted in a sense of fascination for everyday life, and that the essence of the sense of fascination was his deep wonderment about the mundane aspects of everyday life, such as eating and sleeping. It is argued that it is through this wonderment that we encounter the spirit of life as a fundamental force that drives our everyday lives and perceive the workings of the spirit of life.

Such an encounter with the spirit of life leads to the possibility of revisiting the very act of living while questioning the meaning of life. When we are awakened to the spirit of life that permeates each of our actions in everyday life, we are no longer letting ourselves live but being kept alive by the spirit of life. From this perspective, the essence of living is not asking yourself what the meaning of life is, but to listen and respond to the spirit of life that always supports our lives.

Searching for an Alternative Educational Anthropology:
The Baton Handed to Kounosuke Fujimoto from Kei Hachiya

by

Yusuke Uno

The Chair of Educational Anthropology in the Faculty of Pedagogy, the University of Kyoto, was established in 1963. The chair was established through the tradition of the Kyoto Academic School, which is based on the German philosophy and the study of Buddhism. In 1980 Kounosuke Fujimoto, professing educational sociology and having no research background on German philosophy and Buddhism, arrived at the post of Associate Professor of the Chair of Educational Anthropology. This unusual appointment seems to have been due to the recommendation of Kei Hachiya, Professor of the chair, at the time. This article explores both the reasons why Hachiya recommended Fujimoto as the most suitable person for developing a new academic legacy of educational anthropology in Japan, and the goal in which Fujimoto tried to rebuild the concept of educational anthropology. In this investigation, five key phrases that bind Hachiya and Fujimoto together: 'experience of war', 'pragmatism', 'children's group', 'world-view of dualism' and 'ontology of children', will be adopted as the parameters. Through the discussion, the real image of the academic baton being passed from Hachiya to Fujimoto will be discovered. This study will hopefully not only confirm the historical facts, but also give some suggestions in terms of the possibilities and prospects of the future of educational anthropology in Japan.

A Pedagogical-Anthropological Study on Interaction:
The Thinking of Toshiharu Takeuchi

by
Yuta Kishimoto

This article aims to shed light on the meaning of interaction, especially that between yourself and others.

Interaction is a familiar term that one comes across in various discourses and critiques on education and welfare. However, despite the familiarity of the term, the meaning of interaction in our lives and the difficulty of interacting have not been discussed in detail. Takeuchi mentioned a problem that arises when people aim to interact with others. According to him, the fact that people try to incorporate others into their own assumptions and habits is often overlooked. With this problem in mind, this article explores the two-sidedness of the meaning of interaction. To this end, the article provides a detailed description of both a state with and a state without interaction with others, building on Takeuchi's thoughts and practices. Then, the article sheds light on the characteristics and dangers of interaction, while considering the two states mentioned above in relation to Kiyokazu Washida's discussion about heterology and relationships with others.

As a result, the article shows that people must neither incline themselves to nor totally withdraw themselves from interaction with others. It is shown that people should try to interact with others while being aware that it is impossible to gain a full understanding of them.

Walter Benjamin's Conception of Remembering and Narrative

by

Atsuko Tsuji

We encounter so many events everyday life, but they will become our meaningful experience only when they are narrated. In this sense narrative is one of the most primary things whole of human life because life itself is constructed in a narrative. Even in the context of educational research, the conception of narrative has been in the spotlight in decades. It allows us to think about a vivid meaning of education of people who are in charge of teaching children in daily life. Furthermore, considering educational reality as narrative, constructed in language, we would re-discover new meanings of education or pedagogy. However, the possibility that the concept of narrative will open in searching for new meaning of education could bring a risk which makes us face persistent re-narrating that means seeing our life or educational practice in the perspective of relativism. In this paper, to scrutinise the positive aspect of re-narrating of education in relation to unspeakable that rejects relativism, I would like to examine the conception of remembering and 'the expression-less' in Walter Benjamin's thought which especially discussed in his essay on Goethe. This paper is a kind of preparation for the research on re-narrating which alludes the vertical dimension of education.

Henry Nouwen's Grief Work:

The Story of Mother's Life, Death, and Resurrection

by

Sinae Park

"How should I accept the suffering death of my mother, who was a good human being and a sincere Christian?" Henry Nouwen developed a deeper understanding of the meaning of his mother's life and death by superimposing the suffering of Christ on the suffering of his mother. The death of a beloved being is so deeply painful, obstructing us from noticing what lies beyond it. But Nouwen sheds light on the beyond-death that has previously been overlooked and invites us to the mysterious depths of life.

A Study of Subjective Learning

by

Tatsuya Hirayama

In this paper, we will discuss “subjective learning”. Subjective learning is a type of learning that consists of three components: subjective learning, interactive learning, and deep learning, which are also called active learning.

First of all, what does subjective learning look like? Based on the explanation of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, we will classify it into five elements: (1) interest (proactivity), (2) perspective (planning), (3) association with self (awareness), (4) persistence (self-regulation), and (5) reflection (meaning-making and sharing).

In addition, we will address the situation in detail, referring to John Keller’s ARCS model, and consider the 12 methods of motivation to learn in relation to the previous five elements.

The five elements of proactive learning highlight what it is like for a child to be unable to learn independently. There are three possible ways to address this problem: acquisition of knowledge and skills, improvement of teaching methods, and teacher attitude.

Proactive learning is learning and therefore needs to be assessed. However, independence and motivation are difficult to measure objectively. Furthermore, there are situations in which a proactive attitude is enforced in the school setting, which leads to an undesirable situation of enacted agency.

Finally, how should we deal with subjective learning? When children aim for subjective learning set by the teacher, they cannot break away from teacher-led learning, and the subjectivity that is played by the teacher follows them. Subjective learning takes shape little by little as the teacher and the child value their respective areas and roles, and as they work together to create education.

Individuality of Death: Based on the Experience of a Teacher

by

Tetsuo Miyazaki

This paper discusses the educational topic about “Death of students”. Furthermore, that is “Death of my student”. This tragedy suddenly befell me few years ago, as I was working as a high school teacher. This plain statement in accordance with my sad experience is apt to induce me to confess the doubt for moral values. However, such thinking is hiding the intention of trying to tell the death of a specific person as a common occurrence. Everyone can tell “Death” as the similar loss experience even if there are differences among their extent. It certainly leads that the individuality of death is being treated lightly. There is no doubt that the value does not exist in keeping the detailed records of every conceivable kind of death respectively. People should sometimes mourn death quietly without meaningless words. The reason why this paper is still trying to tell the death of my student is that I wanted to stand up on the same stage which he desired in exchange for even his life.

I cannot help thinking that this endless reflection on death means the communication with the dead. Though I cannot still find the explicit answer why he chose losing his life, I continue to keep him in my mind with the people he left behind by withholding the final conclusion, leaving it as a mystery, and not giving the meaning to his death. Our decision after he passed away such as this is the very drama he hoped for and how we should mourn for his death is the same thing we are hoping for.

The Child's Understanding of Death as "Un-Knowing":
An Experience of Life as Imminence in Bataille

by

Yasuko Miyazaki

This paper discusses young children's understanding of death according to French Thinker Georges Bataille (1897-1962). I begin with an analysis of scenes dealing with death and its images in Rene Clement's film *Jeux interdits* (Forbidden Games) in 1952, in which death is portrayed, for adults, as a concrete, physical event in extra-ordinariness and, for children, it is something that has less impact than the separation from loved ones. This leads us to wonder if young children (especially less than 5 years old) really understand death as adults do. I then discuss the result of a survey questionnaire on the image of death among young children and descriptions of death in childcare diaries at a kindergarten specially for under 3 years old children to see what death means for them. Finally, I discuss Georges Bataille's theory about death and humans comparing to Hegel's idea of "the life of spirit (das Leben des Geistes)" that facing to death leads human to awakening our spirits: that the consciousness of death and led humans to use tools to avoid it, distinguishing us from animals but enclosing us within the dimension of humanity (utility). I conclude that an inner experience of death diverts us toward sovereignty, and that such death is "un-knowing (non-savoir)," as when young children convey to us the moment of life as a whole – the life as imminence.

Difficulty to Speak of Abraham, and Kierkegaard's Eloquence

by

Seiro Yamauchi

It is an ordinary part of our daily routine to learn about and study unknown experiences through stories. When the experience that we learn about is completely different from our ordinary experience, however, a number of difficulties arise. For example, the story of the sacrifice of Issac by Abraham in the book of Genesis in the Old Testament is very easy to understand as a simple story. But, on the other hand, the true meaning of the story is not easy to understand. Abraham's story has a unique characteristic. It doesn't have to respond to needs from its "realism", but to needs from "the truth of the story" (Auerbach). Therefore, it is also difficult to tell the story properly to the listeners. Kierkegaard discusses the difficulty of telling this kind of story at length in his *Fear and Trembling*. As a result, however, his challenge to retell the story of Abraham is rather unsuccessful. But Kierkegaard's failure is a valuable failure in the sense that it raises new issues about the construction of educational relationships through stories. The issues presented by Kierkegaard are issues that we must overcome through the act of telling and retelling.

A Sketch of “Care for Life” in Katsumi Tobino

by

Sunji Lee

This article describes “Care for Life” in Katsumi Tobino. Tobino has written articles on education from “Criticism against Modern Education,” “Narrative” and “Care for Life.” It will become clear that Tobino has developed arguments regarding education from the radix of our life throughout his career.

In the first place, this article shows the way in which Tobino developed the “Criticism against Modern Education.” While Tobino agreed with this criticism, he raised a question regarding the radix of our life and death as humans in this world.

In the second place, this paper analyzes how Tobino has developed the above question as the arguments on narrative. Tobino examined the narrative not only as literary criticism, but also as “life.” On the other hand, he criticized the aspect of narrative as integration. The aspect of narrative that Tobino focused on was the creative function as “Musubu” that faces the creation and metamorphose with joy.

Lastly, based on above, this article examines “Care for Life” in Tobino. He found out the aspect of education except the function for economic rationality and social availability. As the result, he posed education as “Care for Life” that comprehends the whole side of our life. As an example of this care, Tobino described the funniness of the fact that we had been born in this world. We can never choose who our parents or children are. There is no reason why we were born into this family. “Care for Life” in Tobino is an approach to this absence of reason and cause of funniness.

A Study on the Physicality of “Encounter” in Modern Society:
Based on Pedagogical Anthropology

by
Airi Asakura

Discussed by philosophers and scholars for a long time, the concept of “encounter” has been regarded as one of the most important events of human life and education. The situation often happens to us that unexpected encounters change our lives. However, with the appearance of new technologies, the physicality of human communication is gradually changing. In this paper, the author will consider how we should “encounter” things or people in modern society by clarifying the relationship between “encounters” and the physical effect.

When human beings “encounter” something or someone, they physically experience these feelings: the feeling of surprise and the conflict between two existences. In addition, those “encounters” are always supported by the actual knowledge and experience they already have.

The author discovered that the knowledge and experience that enable people to “encounter” something or someone are acquired through physical activities. In modern society, non-face-to-face communication, such as that via information and communication technology (ICT), is increasing due to the development of communication technology. However, it is not until they engage in face-to-face communication that human beings really experience “encounters,” like spending some time in the same place with others or touching others directly.

To have a good “encounter” in modern society, people should think deeply about how they live their lives, especially how they interact with others and the situations surrounding them today. Direct communication supported by their real knowledge and experience allows them to realize the importance of others and themselves.

Nietzsche's Theory of *Werden*

by

Takahiro Iwami

This article develops Nietzsche's theory of *Werden* in relation to the interpretation of the will to power. Nietzsche criticized the metaphysical value thesis by developing the concept of *Werden* based on his theory of art. However, it is shown that Nietzsche did not argue that *Werden* totally excluded the value thesis but identified some value in the value thesis in metaphysical settings, and that he, identifying an element of existence in *Werden* itself by overcoming the dichotomy between *Werden* and existence as an appearance, demonstrated the inseparability of *Werden* and existence.

First, the article discusses the will to power. In the discussion on the will to power, emphasis is placed on the commonality between Dionysian elements, especially in Nietzsche's theory of art, and *Werden*.

Building on the interpretation of the will to power discussed in the previous section, the next section develops Nietzsche's theory of *Werden*. Specifically, the reality of the concept of *Werden* is revealed, as well as the fact that *Werden* was a contrasting concept to metaphysical existence.

Next, the article discusses the interpretation of existence. The concept of existence has two aspects: metaphysics and appearance. Nietzsche stressed the need for existence as an appearance.

Finally, the article discusses the relationship between *Werden* and existence. The relationship is not presented as a dichotomy between *Werden* and metaphysical existence, but as a new relationship where *Werden* and existence mutually interact. This new relationship departs from the passive idea that existence is necessary for *Werden*, and adopts an active idea whereby existence is affirmed by *Werden* and, furthermore, *Werden* includes existence.

A Note on the Driving Force of Caring for Life

by

Ikuhiro Okamoto

When we feel strong compassion, which surpasses pity, to those who have been made weak or small, the feeling reveals our own fragility and vulnerability. Then we might be overwhelmed by the sense of indebtedness, thinking as if we are out of the situation and enforcing others' sufferings.

This paper aims to consider the meaning of this indebtedness with caring, driven by the feeling, for others as its threshold. In the process of consideration, the author of this paper gives an overview of some phases of Caring for Life, which is one of the primordial human behaviors, and makes it clear that it is strongly connected to indebtedness, which exists deep within ourselves as the driving force of Caring for Life

Indebtedness comes into existence ceaselessly within all those who involved in Caring for Life (i.e. every person). As its conclusion, this paper insists that indebtedness turns into the real driving force of Caring for Life only when we impose the caring on ourselves hoping to resolve it.

The consideration on the driving force of Caring for Life is to be a part of response to a personal inner question of the author of this paper, which is indispensable for him to keep on his profession, but it concerns one of the significant discussions in Educational Anthropologies of Lived Experience as well.

The Life Left Behind:
A Contribution to “Anthropology of Education on Grief”

by
Kohei Tateno

This article attempts to look more specifically at “the sorrow of life” proposed by Prof. Tobino.

Tobino argues that “the Sorrow of Life” starts from being aware of the fact that life itself, as a principle, is both finite and incomplete. This is not just a simple negative feeling. Rather, it is a reflection which derives from the condition of not being able to fight with bereavement and death. Although we are aware of this situation, we still keep on living in which Tobino sees “the Sorrow of Life”. Thus he provides the viewpoint for reconsidering education.

In this study, the author takes what Tobino calls “the Sorrow of Life” and tries to embody it under two points. First point is that, the death which “I” always had known as a concept, takes the form of real experience at some point. Yet the death experienced is not “my death” but “your death”. The second point is that, the “I”, who survived “your death”, am to start to live again. Through the consideration of these two points under both the psychological concept of “object loss” and anthropological examination of the Japanese phrases such as “iki wo hikitoru (expire)”, the author tries to clarify the state of being of “I” who survived “your death”.

As a result, we see that “the Sorrow of Life” is actualized by “me”, mourning you, missing you, and left behind by you. This links to the idea that if education had its roots in the understanding of “the Sorrow of Life” it can be thought as “care for life”.

Small Comment on Our Old Age:
As One of Members in the Middle of Old Age

by
Yoshihiko Murashima

Already four years have passed since my own KOKI. Now I am really in the middle of old age. At last I received the full license to comment on this theme. Please listen for a while to my small whispers about old age itself.

In the middle of this age I often felt the pain of frequent forgetfulness, decline of looks, loss of tenacity, uncertain steps and so forth. These damages cannot help depriving our confidence and pride. Accordingly old age is for us much troublesome and negative toned.

If so is such an age really needless and useless in total? Basically it is full of misery and humiliation. We must endure them or rather live with dry irony of making fun of such ourselves. In this meaning our death also will be a nice gift or salvation.

But aren't there any positive meanings in our old age? In the middle of this age we necessarily feel that our lives are nearly over. So one of my friends whispered like this ; "After our KOKI we are often inclined to listen to the voice of Heaven rather than that of Others". I also agree with him. Old age seems to have nice power to make our eyes open to Heaven.

For that reason I am recently more and more interested in the German idea of Beruf (=job). For this Beruf contains double meanings. That is to say, one is the job to earn daily food and another is the special post to which Heaven assigned us to make ourselves more brilliant. The latter is much exciting to me.

In addition I also am interested in the Plato's suggestion that we mortals are like the puppet of god. According to Plato almost our deeds are manipulated by the hand of God. Our history will be the same. We must do our best to become the good actor in highly divine theatre.

In conclusion we had better pay heed to such proverb as "Man is mere planner, Heaven is real performer". For at this proverb the planner was divided from the performer.